PDF PAGE 1, COLUMN 3

HELD ON MURDER CHARGE IN MARY PHAGAN CASE

Photo by Francis E. Price Staff Photographer

John M. Gantt, former bookkeeper of the National Pencil company, and acquaintance of Mary Phagan, who is under arrest, and was put through a grueling third degree last night at police station. He maintains his innocence.

PDF PAGE 1, COLUMN 4

Who Saw Pretty Mary Phagan

After 12 O’Clock on Saturday?

A remarkable fact in connection with the murder of Mary Phagan is that no one has thus far come forward stating they saw her after she drew her pay at the National Pencil factory shortly after 12 o'clock.

Several persons have stated that they "believed" they saw her or that they "saw a girl answering her description," but positive statements are lacking.

The Atlanta detective department is particularly anxious to trace every movement of the girl from the time she left the

factory, and is particularly desirous of obtaining the names of all who saw Mary Phagan after 12 o'clock Saturday.

PDF PAGE 1, COLUMN 7

PINKERTONS HIRED TO ASSIST POLICE PROBE THE MURDER OF MARY PHAGAN

For Hours Detectives Labor

With John M. Gant, For-

mer Employee of National

Pencil Company and Al-

leged Admirer of Pretty

Mary Phagan.

SISTER OF PRISONER

ADMITS SHE DECEIVED

ATLANTA DETECTIVES

Told Them Gant Had Not

Been Home When He De-

clared He Was in Bed.

Now Admits Story Untrue.

Gant Caught in Marietta,

With Suit Case Filled With

His Clothes.

Despite the fact that four suspects in the Mary Phagan case are held at police station, two white men and two negroes, the detective department is not satisfied, and the city is being scoured for evidence that will lead to the arrest of the guilty party.

Last night the Pinkerton detective department was engaged by Leo M. Frank, president of the National Pencil company, to aid the local officers in the search for the man responsible for the brutal murder, committed Sunday morning in the plant of his company on Forsyth street.

All day Monday detectives worked diligently for evidence which would throw light upon the mysterious killing, and when night came they were baffled. The most careful investigation

failed to show that any one had seen the girl since she left the factory, where she drew her pay Saturday afternoon. Several people said they thought they had seen her, but none were positive. All the evidence too, proved the good character of the victim. Members of her family, neighbors and her fellow workers united in paying tribute to her good qualities.

Gant Given

Third Degree.

Desperately striving to force the confession that he is the murderer of Mary Phagan, third degree experts of police headquarters labored until midnight Monday with John M. Gant, the young bookkeeper arrested in Marietta yesterday afternoon on the direct charge of murder.

He stoutly protests innocence:

"I was at home Saturday night by 10 o'clock—in bed and asleep."

His sister, Mrs. F. C. Terrell, of 248 East Linden street, with whom he lived, told detectives Sunday night:

"Mr. Gant left here a month ago for California. I haven't seen him since. He has not been here at any time within the past four weeks."

Sister Admits

Deceiving Detectives.

Monday afternoon, however, she told a reporter for The Constitution that Gant had ben at her home Saturday and Sunday nights. She also admitted

having told the detectives a story to the contrary.

"I knew they were detectives—I lied. John was here Saturday night. He was here Sunday night, too. I didn't want the detectives to know it, though."

Gant left Atlanta early Monday morning. Police headquarters learned he had caught a Marietta trolley car. The police of that place was notified. He was arrested the moment he stepped from the car.

Detective Haslett rushed him to police headquarters at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Immediately, he was closeted with Chief Lanford. A squad of detectives and criminal experts pulled off their coats, rolled their sleeves and prepared for a determined siege, which they vowed would not end until they had been convinced that Gant was either guilty or innocent.

They were still locked with the suspect at midnight. Evidently, he was undergoing the ordeal with fortitude. Had an admission been made, he undoubtedly would have emerged from the office. The charge against him is murder. He will not be allowed bond, visitors or communication with the outside world.

Developments in the horrible mystery came thick and fast Monday, arrest followed arrest. Five were made in all. Three were made Monday. The first of these was the taking into custody of Leo M. Frank, president of the pencil factory.

His detainment was made in the nature of an investigation. After an hour's interrogation, he was released. Upon his appearance at headquarters, he was accompanied by counsel and refused to make a statement of any character until his attorney had been consulted.

It was largely upon Frank’s testimony that the search for Gant continued. He told of the youth’s apparent infatuation for

the dead girl, his appearance at the factory holding at nightfall Saturday, and of his talk with the suspected watchman. Newt Lee, the negro believed to have been implicated in the crime.

Gant is a former employee of the pencil plant. He was a bookkeeper connected with the office force. Admitting that he was in intimate acquaintance of the slain girl, he declares, however, that he had not seen her since he left the company.

“I went to the factory building Saturday night about 6:00 o’clock,” he says. “I wanted to get a pair of shoes I had left in the place when I quit, three weeks ago. I went to Mr. Frank and then to the negro watchman. When I got the shoes, I left and have not been back since I sewar I have not, and I have not seen Miss Phagan.”

The first intimation given of his suspected complicity in the deed was gained from the negro watchman Monday afternoon. He was undergoing rigid questioning by detectives. They were being assisted by P. Y. Brent, of the W. E. Treadwell company. The negro once was an employee of Mr. Brent's, who had volunteered to assist in the investigation.

After three hours of grueling third degree, Mr. Brent said to the prisoner:

"I know what's the trouble. Someone you are faithful to killed that girl. You know all about it. I wouldn't be surprised if you didn't have a hand in it yourself. You don't want to tell because you want to shield whoever murdered her."

Mary Phagan, Her Family and the Undertaking Establishment

In the upper picture is shown victim’s mother, Mrs. Fannie Coleman; stepfather, J. W. Coleman, and sister and two brothers; next an artists sketch of Mary Phagan; and in the bottom picture the curious crowd that thronged in front of Bloomfield’s undertaking establishment, to which the body has

been taken.

"Your Loyalty Or Neck."

"I'm going to tell you this—it's just a question of loyalty or your neck. You can't keep but one."

"Yessir, Mr. Brent; that's a fact. I know that."

His lips were trembling and he shifted nervously. It was apparent that he was collapsing. His questioners waited eagerly for an expected confession. The negro checked himself, moistened his lips, realized the import of his words, and recovered.

"But I don't know nothing. I don't know a thing."

His replies to the thousands of questions hurled at him was an incessant reiteration of his first story—the story of the body's discovery. When this failed to check the onslaught of queries, he fell to answering them with the stereotyped reply:

"I don't know. I don't know a thing."

He was sent back to prison. Hereafter, he will be confined to the dungeon. The police are confident of their suspicion. The negro either was implicated in the murder, they say, or was acquainted with the slayer.

After an all-night hunt for Gant, police headquarters was notified early Monday morning that the hunted man was seen at an early hour, departing hurriedly from a saloon directly across the street from the building in which the murder occurred. Herbert Schiff, assistant superintendent of the plant, was sitting in his office when he spied the ex-bookkeeper hurrying from the saloon.

In the upper picture is shown the victim's mother, Mrs. Fannie Coleman; stepfather, J. W. Coleman, and sister and two brothers; next an artist's sketch of Mary Phagan; and in the bottom picture the curious crowd that thronged in front of Bloomfield's undertaking establishment, to which the body had been taken.

Schiff Calls

Police Station.

Schiff called police station. The trail was lost, though, before sleuths could reach Forsyth street. Detectives were sent to every street and railway station, equipped with a description of Gantt. An acquaintance notified the police that the wanted man had boarded a Marietta car at the Transportation building on Walton street.

Marietta was wired and ordered to arrest Gantt by all means. He was caught and detained in the Cobb county jail until the arrival of Detective Haslett. He was equipped for a long journey, carrying a well-filled suitcase. He used it to shield his face from the battery of newspaper cameras that attacked him upon his arrival at police headquarters.

Mary Pirk, a girl employee of the pencil factory, said Monday that she had often heard gossip concerning Gantt's infatuation for the Phagan girl.

The negro watchman told detectives that Gantt had remained in the factory building twenty or thirty minutes Saturday night. While searching for the shoes, Lee said, he had gone to the office on the second floor, and talked over the telephone in low tones with a girl or woman. The conversation was a lengthy one, the watchman declared.

Mrs. Terrell told Detectives Luther Brooks and Y. T. Allen Sunday night that Gantt had been to California for a month, and that she had not heard from him any whatever during that time.

Worried Over

Failure to Write.

She expressed worry over his failure to write. Usually, she declared, he had always sent her weekly letters or postcards whenever leaving the city. The story she told The Constitution reporter Monday, though, is contradictory to the statement she made to the detectives.

Telling the reporter that she intentionally had misled the detectives, she said it was done because she did not want them to arrest her brother.

Another phase was added to the tragedy when a sleeping couch was discovered in the basement in which the girl's mutilated body was found. It is an improvised couch, constructed of boxes and covered with a number of cracker and tow sacks. Recent tracks of a woman's shoe were found nearby in the sawdust flooring.

The murder evidently occurred upon the first or second floors. Strands of bloody hair of a shade comparing with the hair of the dead girl, were found on a lathe machine on the second floor. The instrument was also splotched with crimson.

Because of the intense feeling and excitement, naturally prevailing among the hundreds of female employees of the plant, the management Monday morning deemed it prudent to shut down for the day. The doors were closed and a policeman stationed at both the Forsyth and Hunter street entrances. Until dusk, large crowds of the morbidly curious flocked around the place, discussing the murder and seeking entrance to the basement in which the corpse was discovered.

Inquest Set

For Wednesday.

The only persons allowed in the basement, however, were those who accompanied the coroner's jury on its tour of investigation early Monday morning. Coroner Donehoo, after empaneling a jury, postponed the hearing until detectives were able to gather more definite evidence. The inquest will be held Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock in the Bloomfield undertaking establishment.

Mrs. Coleman Better.

Mrs. Coleman, mother of the slain girl, although not entirely recovered from the shock of Sunday, was much improved Monday. She was feeble and had to be confined to her home. Pleading with her husband to escort her to the undertaking establishment to view her daughter's corpse, she insisted that she be carried there.

Her physician would not permit it. It is thought, however, that she will be able to attend the funeral today. Throughout Sunday and Monday neighborhood friends of the bereaved family flocked to the modest little home on Lindsay street, consoling the parents and brothers and sisters of the dead girl.

For a time Sunday afternoon and early that night fears were felt for the safety of the negro watchman suspected of complicity in the crime. Reports that a mob of white men was being formed, caused Chief Beavers to hold a reserve of a half hundred mounted policemen in headquarters until late at night.

The only trouble encountered, however, was by Chief Lanford, Detectives Starnes and Black, Boots Rogers, driver of the automobile in which the sleuths visited the factory, and a reporter for The Constitution who accompanied the party. It occurred shortly after daybreak.

The Constitution's exclusive extra had drawn a huge crowd of men and boys to the pencil factory. The negro was being taken

from headquarters to the scene of the crime. When he came from the building and was placed in the automobile, threatening remarks came from the crowd that thronged around the machine.

"He ought to be lynched," said a heavy-set man who edged close to the rear seat, in which sat the detective chief and his prisoner.

"Yes," said another, "and I'd help do it."

The engines were running. Starnes and Black had not climbed into the machine. Lanford called to Rogers to hurry away. Without waiting for the two detectives or the reporter, the machine rushed down Forsyth street.

White Slavery Theory Advanced.

Equipped with evidence indicating that Mary Phagan was the victim of a white slavery plot that was foiled only by her brutal murder, detectives have turned their investigation to an entirely new phase of the baffling mystery.

Police headquarters has been informed of a garishly attired woman seen shortly before midnight Saturday in company with two youths and a reeling, weeping girl answering the dead girl's description convincingly.

They were seen at Alabama and Forsyth streets, only a short distance from the building in which she was murdered. The girl was sobbing and was being led by the mysterious woman. The two youths followed close behind, murmuring coaxing words in her ear.

The woman was saying:

"Come along, now, dearie. Don't create a scene. You'll attract the cops."

"The girl was sobbing:

"I don't care! I don't care!"

The strange quartette turned down Forsyth street in direction of the pencil factory. They disappeared in the darkness of the plant building.

W. I. Gray, a conductor on the Buckhead trolley line, however, notified the detective department Monday afternoon of the mysterious quartette. Detectives were sent immediately to question him. Energy is being concentrated to investigation along this line.

PDF PAGE 3, COLUMN 1

“I AM NOT GUITLY,” SAYS JOHN M. GANT

"I Was Not in Love With

Mary and She Was Not With Me," Asserts Man Accused of Murder.

"I did not kill Mary Phagan. I haven't seen her within a month. They accuse me falsely. I'm innocent and will swear it by heaven above."

John M. Gant, the youthful bookkeeper arrested on the charge of murdering Mary Phagan, sat in the detective chief's office at police headquarters last night, looked his questioners squarely in the eyes, and sweepingly denied all accusations.

"I went to Marietta to take charge of a farm I have bought. My folks live there. I had been planning to go for several weeks. Surely, the mere fact that I went to Marietta isn't proof conclusive that I killed the girl."

Faces the Detectives.

He talked frankly, never removing his gaze from the eyes of the detectives who quizzed him. He is a handsome youth, six feet

and four inches tall, spare framed, active and supple limbed. His black, curly hair falls over the forehead, and is clipped closely in the back, while the forelocks are long and wavy.

An hour or so after he had been closeted with Chief Lanford and detective experts, he was admitted to the main room of the detectives' quarters, where he was permitted to talk to the newspaper reporters. He conversed frankly, answering questions promptly and freely.

"I'm not guilty. I might be a victim of circumstance, but they can't prove a thing on me. They might as well stop. It would save time and labor. If they'd devote the energy they're devoting to me to hunting the real murderer, they'd catch him a whole lot quicker."

There was a tone of sarcasm in his voice as he alluded to his accusers. He was not bitter, and seemed not the slightest perturbed over the predicament.

Saw Memorial Parade.

"Now, I'll tell you exactly what I did Saturday. First, I saw the Memorial parade. Then I got with some friends and we walked over town a little, here and there, but to no particular place. I was intending to leave town Monday. A pair of old shoes I had worn a month ago were down at the pencil factory. I used to work there, you know, and they were left on the first floor.

"I wanted to get them, and asked Mr. Frank, the president of the plant, if I could get into the building. He said I could, and referred me to the negro nightwatchman. I got into the building and found the shoes. I didn't stay but a short while. About 7:30 o'clock I met two friends. We went to a pool room uptown and played pool until 10:30 o'clock. I didn't play, but sat around and watched the other fellows. When I left the pool room, I went directly to my sister's home on Linden street. She met me at the door. I went straight to bed and was asleep almost the moment I hit the mattress."

Gant declares he did not see The Constitution's exclusive extra Sunday morning, and that he did not know of a murder until informed Sunday night of the story in the extra.

"Where were you when told of the murder?" he was asked.

Learns of the Murder.

"I got up late Sunday morning. That night, I went to see Miss Annie Chambers, of 18 Warren place, with whom I have been going ever since Christmas. We were sitting in the parlor. Her little brother, Philip, came in and said he had read The Constitution's story of a girl being murdered in the pencil factory."

"I was acquainted with most of the girls that worked there. I asked him what was the girl's name.

"'I don't know," he answered. 'They haven't identified her yet.' It was about 8 o'clock at night, then. That was the first I knew of the killing. When I left Miss Chambers' home I went to my sister's house and to bed."

Declaring that he had never gone with the Phagan girl, Gantt ridiculed the rumor that he was infatuated with her. She was beautiful, he admitted, and a girl loved by every employee in the plant.

"When she was a little girl, about ten years ago," he said, "I knew her in Marietta. They lived close to the home of my family in Cobb county. Then I knew her again when she worked in the pencil factory. I had never paid her any particular attention, and was not in love with her. I don't guess she was in love with me. She never said anything, if she was, and she didn't show any signs that would indicate it."

Gant Retains Counsel.

"I could wring the neck of whoever accuses me of such a thing," he blazed. "It's the most atrocious crime I've ever heard of. I never could have conceived it, let alone commit it. The man

is a murderer who would unjustifiably accuse another of such a deed."

Judge George F. Gober, a distant relative of the suspected youth, and senior member of the firm of Gober, Jackson & Leag, has been retained as counsel for Gantt. He made an immediate demand Monday night for preliminary hearing. Chief Lanford declined. Gober stated that he would take out habeas corpus proceedings instantly.

The warrant against Gantt was issued by Justice F. M. Powers to Detective Osborne. It charges murder.

PDF PAGE 3, COLUMN 2

Was Victim of Murder Lured Off on Joy Ride Before She Met Death?

Evidence obtained by Detectives Black and Rosser Monday afternoon has led the detective department to suspect that little Mary Phagan was lured away by her murderer Saturday afternoon by the pleasures of a joy ride, during which she was drugged or made drunk with whisky.

This new aspect of the case came from R. B. Pyron, telegraph operator at the signal tower on the Central of Georgia railroad at the Whitehall street crossing.

Pyron told the detectives Monday afternoon that about 10 o'clock Saturday night he was standing at the entrance to the signal tower when an automobile came from the direction of West End and stopped on Whitehall street just after it had crossed the railroad.

Sobbing and Pleading.

In the rear seat he saw a young girl, answering the description of Mary Phagan. She was sobbing and pleading while a man sitting beside her and another man standing on the running board were talking to her earnestly and apparently trying to quiet her. A third man was at the steering wheel.

"I see many machines pass here, of course," said Pyron, "and never pay any attention to them. But the fact that a young girl was alone in an automobile with three men, and was crying and apparently in trouble, struck me as being so unusual that when the machine stopped I started nearer to it to investigate. But as soon as the occupants saw me they started the machine again, and disappeared in the direction of the city.

"I had thought about it several times since, but not seriously until I read in the papers of the murder of Mary Phagan, whose description tallies with that of the girl I saw."

Mr. Pyron stated that he did not believe he would be able to identify any of the occupants of the car should he see them again.

Man on the Running Board.

The only description of any of the occupants he could give was that of the man on the running board, who, he declared, was of rather slender build and medium stature, wearing a dark suit and a low-crowned straw hat.

The car, he said, was apparently a five-passenger touring car and was black in color.

The detectives late Monday night had been unable to identify the car or any of its occupants.

Mr. Pyron said that the girl was hysterical and appeared to be either drunk or drugged.

PDF PAGE 3, COLUMN 6

“Every Woman and Girl Should See

Body of Victim and Learn Perils”

A middle-aged woman, with signs of care and sorrow stamped on her features, pushed through the mob of people which crowded around the entrance to the Bloomfield undertaking establishment in which lay the body of Mary Phagan.

She made her way determinedly, shoving and pushing. Reaching the doorway she was stopped from entering by Policeman Tribble who stood on guard.

"You can't go in, ma'am. Nobody's allowed to see the body."

"What?" she exclaimed. "Not letting anybody see her?"

She stepped back as if aghast. For a moment she hesitated, apparently undecided whether to say something further in her attempt to gain entrance or to leave the place. The huge crowd pushed closer, breathless, expectant.

"Listen," she burst out, "Every woman in Atlanta, every working girl, every school girl ought to see that little girl in there. They ought to take a good look at her. They ought to see what perils and what dangers they have to face."

"An Education to Women and Girls."

She hesitated slightly as though waiting for her words to take effect. Without moving her eyes from those of the policeman, she resumed.

There are plenty of men in Atlanta and in every other city who are degenerate enough to commit just such murders as that. All women and girls ought to see and be able to realize their danger. You are making a big mistake by not letting anybody in. Everybody ought to be allowed entrance. It's an education to the women and girls. It will open their eyes to peril."

Not a sound was made from the crowd except the noise of shuffling feet as they edged closer. The little woman stopped, gazed ruefully into the interior of the undertaking shop, then moved on up Pryor street toward Mitchell, refusing to give her name.

"No! You can't get my name. You can publish that sermon I gave just now," she exclaimed, "but I won't let you have my name. I'm not fanatic, neither am I crazy. I just know some things that's all, one of which is that every girl that works ought to have some safeguard."

Crowds Throng the Place.

P. J. Bloomfield, manager of the undertaking establishment told a reporter for The Constitution Monday afternoon that fully 10,000 persons, many of whom were women and girls, had viewed the corpse of the slain girl since opening hours that morning.

By 10 o'clock, he said, a mob of men that extended from Mitchell street far out into Pryor, and which flooded the latter

street in front of the shop forced them to close doors to visitors. After 10 o'clock no one was admitted. Police guarded both entrances. More women and girls, women of all classes and types besieged the place for entrance than did men and boys.

This morning at 8 o'clock, the body will be placed on a train and carried to Marietta. The funeral services will be held in the cemetery there at 10 o'clock and the interment will be in that place. A party of friends will accompany the family and attend the services.

Coroner Donehoo gave permission Monday night for the body's removal before the inquest which will be held this morning at 10 o'clock.

PDF PAGE 4, COLUMN 1

$1,000 REWARD

The assault and murder of 14-year-old Mary Phagan comprise the most revolting crime in the history of Atlanta Homicide is bad enough. Criminal assault upon woman is worse. When a mere child, a little girl in knee dresses is the victim of both there are added elements of horror and degeneracy that defy the written word.

This outrage with all its gruesome and pitiful settings occurred in the very heart of Atlanta. It was committed by some human beast with more than jungle cruelty and less than jungle mercy.

The detective force and the entire police authority of Atlanta are on probation in the detection and arrest of this criminal with proof. To justify the confidence that is placed in them and the relation they are assumed to hold toward law and order they must locate this arch-murderer.

All Atlanta, shocked at a crime that has no local parallel in sheer horror and barbarity expects the machinery of the law to be sufficient to meet the call made upon it. If ever the men who ferret crime and uphold law in Atlanta are to justify their function it must be in apprehending the assailant and murderer of Mary Phagan.

Fidelity to oath and pride of reputation should be sufficient incentive to the detectives to insure their solution of this mystery, but as an additional incentive and in expression of what is really a community-wide demand for justice in a particularly abhorrent case—

THE CONSTITUTION OFFERS

$1,000 FOR EXCLUSIVE INFOR-

MATION THAT WILL LEAD TO

THE ARREST AND CONVICTION

OF THE MAN OR MEN GUILTY

OF THE CRIME